

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 5847

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MPOL, NATO, PFOR

SUBJ: EUROGROUP MEETING NOVEMBER 5

REF: THE HAGUE 5834 AND 5792

1. ALTHOUGH NOT HIMSELF A PARTICIPANT, MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR RUTTEN TOLD DCM THAT THE HAGUE VIEWED RECENT EUROGROUP DEFENSE MEETING AS DISTINCT SUCCESS. IN HIS VIEW IT WAS A PITY THAT INITIATIVE HAD NOT COME EARLIER BECAUSE JOINT EUROPEAN EFFORTS COULD MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVEMENT OF STANDARDIZATION AND RATIONALIZATION OBJECTIVES. IT ALSO HELD SOME PROMISE OF BRINGING IN FRENCH, AND DISCUSSIONS WERE NOW PROCEEDING IN BRUSSELS TO SOUND OUT THIS PROSPECT. RUTTEN VIEWS ACTIVITIES OF EUROGROUP AS SUPPORTIVE OF NATO EFFORTS.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT VREDELING-LEBER DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE TRADE-OFF WHEREBY DUTCH WOULD CARRY OUT CERTAIN NAVAL TASKS AND GERMANS COMPENSATE FOR DRAW-DOWN OF NETHERLANDS ARMED FORCES IN FRG, RUTTEN SAID PRESS HAD BLOWN UP VERY TENTATIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON POSSIBILITY OF SUCH ARRANGEMENT. IN FACT, SIMILAR CONVERSATION HAD
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ALSO TAKEN PLACE WITH UK DEFENSE MINISTER MASON. BUT, HE ASSERTED, IDEAS WERE SIMPLY BEING EXCHANGED AT THIS

JUNCTURE. HE RECALLED THAT DUTCH CONSISTENTLY HAD TAKEN
POSITION THAT NATO WOULD BENEFIT IF IT BEGAN TO LOOK AT
DEFENSE CONTRIBUTIONS BY APPLYING CONCEPT OF SPECIALIZA-
TION, AN APPROACH THAT COULD PRODUCE SAVINGS IN NATIONAL
DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, A NEED THAT WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY
IMPERATIVE.
GOULD

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